

FPGA-based decoder for a Delta-Sigma modulator

TN149 | Posted on August 24, 2021 | Updated on May 7, 2025



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This technical note shows how to build a decoder IP for a Delta-Sigma Modulator and establish communication with such a device through USB ports of the [B-Box RCP](#) and [B-Board PRO](#). The corresponding approach uses the user-programmable area inside the FPGA, also known as *sandbox*.

Introduction

Delta-Sigma Modulators are a class of analog-to-digital converters (ADCs) that produce a high-frequency data stream (1-bit), whose pulse density represents the acquired analog value. In data acquisition applications, such devices are particularly useful when only a few (typ. 1-2) digital lines are available. This may notably be essential when data must be carried across a galvanic isolation barrier, such as in numerous power electronic applications.

[Delta-sigma modulation](#) may represent various modulation techniques, resulting in different types of data encoding methods for the digital stream. Common types are [Non-Return-to-Zero](#) (NRZ) and [Manchester coding](#). These techniques differ in their bitrates, but may also offer (or not) the possibility of recovering the clock from the bit stream.

Clock recovery is often an essential feature. Indeed, by recovering the data clock directly from the stream itself, a separate clock becomes dispensable, which further reduces the number of required communication lines. In practice, a delta-sigma modulator can communicate with its associated demodulator with **only one digital line!**

This note provides an implementation example centered around the [AMC1035](#) delta-sigma modulator, which supports two output encoding methods: Non-Return-to-Zero (NRZ) and Manchester coding. The data rate of NRZ coding is 9~21MHz while the data rate of Manchester coding is 9~11MHz. In the next chapter, a decoder for each coding method will be provided.

Related notes

- Instructions on how to build an FPGA project template and how to exchange data between the CPU and the sandbox using the AXI4-Stream interface module can be found in [Getting started with FPGA control development](#).
- The page [AXI4-Stream IP from Xilinx](#) presents the AXI4-Stream interface and the Xilinx AXI4-Stream IPs.
- Another example of how to expand the number of ADC inputs using SPI and user ports is available in [FPGA-based SPI communication IP for ADC](#).

Software sources

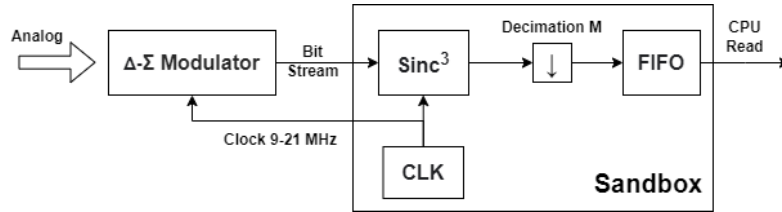
[AMC1035Download](#)

Delta-sigma decoder implementation

Synchronous decoder for NRZ encoding

In synchronous mode, the clock signal is generated by the FPGA, transmitted to the delta-sigma modulator, and used by the latter for the modulation. The same clock is then used for decoding the NRZ bit stream that is received by the FPGA. This approach uses two physical USR ports available from the *sandbox* and one three-order [sinc filter](#) as a decimator.

In general, the suggested system diagram for a synchronous decoder is shown below.



System diagram using a synchronous decoder

The VHDL codes are given below.

AMC1035 driver using synchronous clock

```
library IEEE;
use IEEE.STD_LOGIC_1164.ALL;
use IEEE.std_logic_unsigned.all;
use IEEE.NUMERIC_STD.ALL;

entity amc_driver is
    port(
        -- Configuration from CPU
        AMC_M : in std_logic_vector(15 downto 0); -- Decimation ratio

        -- Input from AMC1035:
        DATA_IN : in std_logic; -- Input bit stream
        CLK : in std_logic; -- AMC clock input

        -- sinc3 filter output using AXI4-Stream (Non-blocking)
        M_AXIS_DATA_tdata : out std_logic_vector(31 downto 0);
        M_AXIS_DATA_tvalid : out std_logic;

        -- Active low reset
        RESN : in std_logic
    );
end amc_driver;

architecture rtl of amc_driver is

    ATTRIBUTE X_INTERFACE_INFO : STRING;
    ATTRIBUTE X_INTERFACE_INFO of CLK: SIGNAL is "xilinx.com:signal:clock:1.0 clk CLK";

    -- Divided CLK : f_CNR = f_CLK/M
    signal CNR : std_logic := '0';

    -- Intermediate signals of sinc3 filter
    signal DN0, DN1, DN3, DN5 : std_logic_vector(31 downto 0);
    signal CN1, CN2, CN3, CN4, CN5 : std_logic_vector(31 downto 0);
    signal DELTA1 : std_logic_vector(31 downto 0);

begin

    -- Generate divided CLK
    P_CNR : process(CLK)
        variable CNR_cnt: unsigned(15 downto 0):=(others=>'0');
    begin
        if rising_edge(CLK) then
            M_AXIS_DATA_tvalid <= '0'; -- Default
            -- Toggle CNR
            if CNR_cnt+1 >= unsigned('0' & AMC_M(15 downto 1)) then
                CNR_cnt := (others => '0');
                CNR <= not CNR;
                if CNR = '0' then
                    M_AXIS_DATA_tvalid <= '1'; -- Data is valid at each CNR rising edge
                end if;
            else
                --
            end if;
        end if;
    end process;

end rtl;
```

```

        CNR_cnt := CNR_cnt + 1;
    end if;
end if;
end process P_CNR;

-- sinc3 filter input
process(CLK, RESN)
begin
    if RESN = '0' then
        DELTA1 <= (others => '0');
    elsif CLK'event and CLK = '1' then
        if DATA_IN = '1' then
            DELTA1 <= DELTA1 + 1;
        end if;
    end if;
end process;

-- Integral
process(RESN, CLK)
begin
    if RESN = '0' then
        CN1 <= (others => '0');
        CN2 <= (others => '0');
    elsif CLK'event and CLK = '1' then
        CN1 <= CN1 + DELTA1;
        CN2 <= CN2 + CN1;
    end if;
end process;

-- Comb
process(RESN, CNR)
begin
    if RESN = '0' then
        DN0 <= (others => '0');
        DN1 <= (others => '0');
        DN3 <= (others => '0');
        DN5 <= (others => '0');
    elsif CNR'event and CNR = '1' then
        DN0 <= CN2;
        DN1 <= DN0;
        DN3 <= CN3;
        DN5 <= CN4;
    end if;
end process;

CN3 <= DN0 - DN1;
CN4 <= CN3 - DN3;
CN5 <= CN4 - DN5;
M_AXIS_DATA_tdata <= CN5;

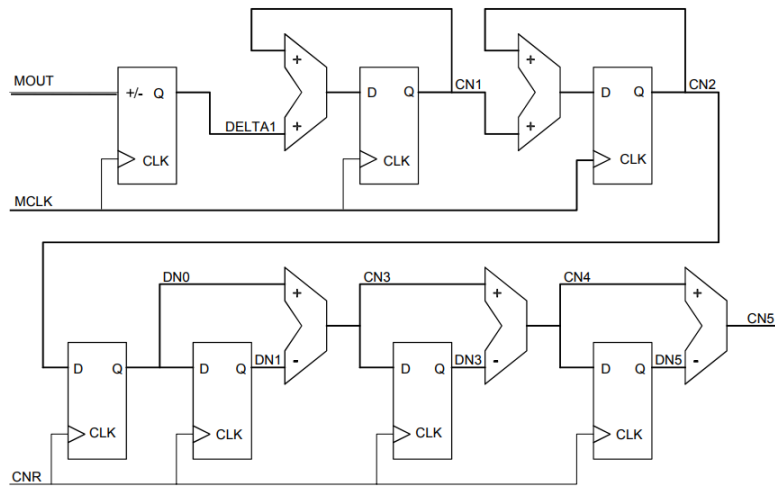
end rtl;

```

Code language: VHDL (vhdl)

- The AMC1035 sends a NRZ (Non-Return-to-Zero) coded bit stream
- The clock is generated by the FPGA and fed to the AMC1035 and decoder block, synchronously
- The decimation ratio M can be configured from the CPU using an [SBO register](#)
- The output data is a 32-bit unsigned integer available on an AXI4-Stream interface

The sinc³ filter is implemented using CIC ([Cascaded integrator-comb filter](#)) architecture as shown below. CIC is an efficient implementation of a moving-average filter, which is built using adders and registers only. The relationship between the decimation ratio M and the output data width is given in the table below.



Xilinx sinc³ filter implementation (taken from [TI document](#))

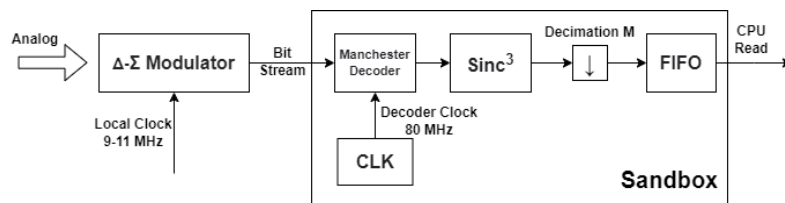
Decimation	Date Rate (kHz)	Gain _{DC} (bits)	Total Output Width (bits)
4	2500	6	7
8	1250	9	10
16	625	12	13
32	312.5	15	16
64	156.2	18	19

Summary of the sin³ filter for 10MHz sampling clock

Manchester decoder

In Manchester coding mode, the AMC1035 can be clocked with a local clock, whose phase and frequency are unknown. On the FPGA side, this approach needs only one user port, for receiving the data stream, and one three-order sinc filter as decimator. In addition, a Manchester decoder is needed to translate Manchester-encoded data to NRZ. This mode has the advantage of reducing the number of used user ports but the drawback of a reduced data rate (down to 9~11MHz).

In general, the suggested system diagram using the Manchester decoder is shown below.



System diagram using Manchester decoder

The VHDL codes are given below.

AMC1035 driver using Manchester decoding

```

library IEEE;
use IEEE.STD_LOGIC_1164.ALL;
use IEEE.std_logic_unsigned.all;
use IEEE.NUMERIC_STD.ALL;

entity amc_driver_md is
    port(
        -- Configuration from CPU
        AMC_M: in std_logic_vector(15 downto 0); -- Decimation ratio

        -- Input data from delta-sigma modulator
        DATA_IN : in std_logic; -- AMC DATA input

        -- sinc3 filter output using AXI4-Stream (Non-blocking)
        M_AXIS_DATA_tdata : out std_logic_vector(31 downto 0);
        M_AXIS_DATA_tvalid : out std_logic;
    );
end entity amc_driver_md;

```

```

    -- Decoder clock
    CLK : in std_logic;

    -- Active low reset
    RESN : in std_logic
  );
end amc_driver_md;

architecture rtl of amc_driver_md is

  ATTRIBUTE X_INTERFACE_INFO : STRING;
  ATTRIBUTE X_INTERFACE_INFO of CLK: SIGNAL is "xilinx.com:signal:clock:1.0 clk CLK";

  -- Intermediate signals of Manchester decoder
  signal Q0, Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4 : std_logic := '0';
  signal INV_1, INV_2, XOR2, OR2_1, AND2B1, AND2, OR2_2, AND3B2 : std_logic := '0';

  -- Manchester decoder output
  signal DATA_MD : std_logic; -- Output data
  signal STROBE : std_logic; -- Output data valid

  -- Divided AMC_CLK : f_CNR = f_CLK/M
  signal CNR_rising_edge : std_logic;
  signal CNR_cnt : unsigned(15 downto 0) := (others=>'0');

  -- Intermediate signals of sinc3 filter
  signal DN0, DN1, DN3, DN5 : std_logic_vector(31 downto 0);
  signal CN1, CN2, CN3, CN4, CN5 : std_logic_vector(31 downto 0);
  signal DELTA1 : std_logic_vector(31 downto 0);

begin

  -- Manchester decoder
  DATA_MD <= INV_2; -- 0: falling 1: rising
  INV_1 <= not Q0;
  INV_2 <= not Q1;
  XOR2 <= Q0 xor INV_2;
  OR2_1 <= XOR2 or Q2;
  AND2B1 <= OR2_1 and (not Q4);
  AND2 <= Q3 and OR2_2;
  OR2_2 <= Q2 or Q4;
  AND3B2 <= (not Q2) and (not Q4) and XOR2;

  P_MD : process(CLK)
  begin
    if rising_edge(CLK) then
      Q0 <= DATA_IN;
      Q1 <= INV_1;
      Q2 <= AND2B1;
      Q3 <= Q2;
      Q4 <= AND2;
      STROBE <= AND3B2;
    end if;
  end process P_MD;

  -- Generate CNR
  P_CNR : process(CLK, RESN)
  begin
    if RESN = '0' then
      CNR_cnt <= (others=>'0');
    elsif rising_edge(CLK) then
      CNR_rising_edge <= '0';
      if STROBE = '1' then -- Data is valid
        -- Toggle postscaled_CNR
        if CNR_cnt+1 >= unsigned(AMC_M) then
          CNR_rising_edge <= '1';
          CNR_cnt <= (others => '0');
        else
          CNR_cnt <= CNR_cnt + 1;
        end if;
      end if;
    end if;
  end process P_CNR;

  -- sinc3 filter
  P_SINC3 : process(CLK, RESN)
  begin
    if RESN = '0' then
      DELTA1 <= (others => '0');
      CN1 <= (others => '0');
    end if;
  end process P_SINC3;
end architecture rtl;

```


Testbench for AMC1035 driver using synchronous clock

```
library IEEE;
use IEEE.STD_LOGIC_1164.ALL;
use IEEE.NUMERIC_STD.ALL;

entity AMC_driver_tb is
end entity AMC_driver_tb;

architecture rtl of AMC_driver_tb is

constant MCLK_PERIOD : time := 100ns; -- DSM CLK
constant MCLK_LOW    : time := MCLK_PERIOD / 2;
constant MCLK_HIGH   : time := MCLK_PERIOD / 2;
signal mclk : std_logic;

signal RESN : std_logic;

signal DATA_IN : std_logic;
signal M : std_logic_vector(15 downto 0) := std_logic_vector(to_unsigned(8, 16)); -- Decimation ratio

component amc_driver is
    port(
        -- Configuration from CPU
        AMC_M : in std_logic_vector(15 downto 0); -- Decimation ratio

        -- Input from AMC1035:
        DATA_IN : in std_logic; -- Input bit stream
        CLK : in std_logic; -- AMC clock input

        -- sinc3 filter output using AXI4-Stream (Non-blocking)
        M_AXIS_DATA_tdata : out std_logic_vector(31 downto 0);
        M_AXIS_DATA_tvalid : out std_logic;

        -- Active low reset
        RESN : in std_logic
    );
end component amc_driver;

-- input NRZ coded '0'
procedure input_0 (signal DATA_IN : inout std_logic) is
begin
    wait until rising_edge(mclk);
    DATA_IN <= '0';
    wait for MCLK_PERIOD;
end procedure input_0;

-- input NRZ coded '1'
procedure input_1 (signal DATA_IN : inout std_logic) is
begin
    wait until rising_edge(mclk);
    DATA_IN <= '1';
    wait for MCLK_PERIOD;
end procedure input_1;

begin
    dut: amc_driver
    port map (
        AMC_M => M,
        DATA_IN => DATA_IN,
        CLK => mclk,
        M_AXIS_DATA_tdata => open,
        M_AXIS_DATA_tvalid => open,
        RESN => RESN
    );

    -- Reset process
    p_reset : process is
    begin
        wait until falling_edge(mclk);
        RESN <= '0';
        wait for 3*MCLK_PERIOD;
        RESN <= '1';
        wait;
    end process p_reset;

    -- MCLOCK process
    p_mclk: process is
    begin
        mclk <= '0';
```

```

        wait for 0.4 * MCLK_LOW;
        mclk <= '1';
        WAIT FOR MCLK_HIGH;
        mclk <= '0';
        wait for 0.6 * MCLK_LOW;
    end process p_mclk;

    -- Test process
    p_test : process is
    begin

        -- input "1001"
        input_1(DATA_IN);
        input_0(DATA_IN);
        input_0(DATA_IN);
        input_1(DATA_IN);

        --      -- input "1000"
        --      input_1(DATA_IN);
        --      input_0(DATA_IN);
        --      input_0(DATA_IN);
        --      input_0(DATA_IN);

        --      -- input "1110"
        --      input_1(DATA_IN);
        --      input_1(DATA_IN);
        --      input_1(DATA_IN);
        --      input_0(DATA_IN);

        -- Add more input patterns

    end process p_test;

```

```
end architecture rtl;
```

```
Code language: VHDL (vhdl)
```

Testbench for AMC1035 driver using Manchester decoding

```

library IEEE;
use IEEE.STD_LOGIC_1164.ALL;
use IEEE.NUMERIC_STD.ALL;

entity AMC_driver_md_tb is
end entity AMC_driver_md_tb;

architecture rtl of AMC_driver_md_tb is

    constant CLK_PERIOD : time := 12.5ns; -- Decoder CLK
    constant CLK_LOW    : time := CLK_PERIOD / 2;
    constant CLK_HIGH   : time := CLK_PERIOD / 2;
    signal clk : std_logic;

    constant MCLK_PERIOD : time := 100ns; -- DSM CLK
    constant MCLK_LOW    : time := MCLK_PERIOD / 2;
    constant MCLK_HIGH   : time := MCLK_PERIOD / 2;
    signal mclk : std_logic;

    signal RESN : std_logic;

    signal DATA_IN : std_logic;
    signal M : std_logic_vector(15 downto 0) := std_logic_vector(to_unsigned(8, 16)); -- Decimation ratio

    component amc_driver_md is
        port(
            -- Configuration from CPU
            AMC_M: in std_logic_vector(15 downto 0); -- Decimation ratio

            -- Input data from delta-sigma modulator
            DATA_IN : in std_logic; -- AMC DATA input

            -- sinc3 filter output using AXI4-Stream (Non-blocking)
            M_AXIS_DATA_tdata : out std_logic_vector(31 downto 0);
            M_AXIS_DATA_tvalid : out std_logic;

            -- Decoder clock
            CLK : in std_logic;

            -- Active low reset
            RESN : in std_logic
        );
    end component amc_driver_md;

```



```

-- input Manchester coded '0'
procedure input_0 (signal DATA_IN : inout std_logic) is
begin
    wait until rising_edge(mclk);
    DATA_IN <= '1';
    wait until falling_edge(mclk);
    DATA_IN <= '0';
end procedure input_0;

-- input Manchester coded '1'
procedure input_1 (signal DATA_IN : inout std_logic) is
begin
    wait until rising_edge(mclk);
    DATA_IN <= '0';
    wait until falling_edge(mclk);
    DATA_IN <= '1';
end procedure input_1;

begin
    dut: amc_driver_md
    port map (
        AMC_M => M,
        DATA_IN => DATA_IN,
        M_AXIS_DATA_tdata => open,
        M_AXIS_DATA_tvalid => open,
        CLK => clk,
        RESN => RESN
    );

    -- Reset process
    p_reset : process is
    begin
        wait until falling_edge(clk);
        RESN <= '0';
        wait for 3*CLK_PERIOD;
        RESN <= '1';
        wait;
    end process p_reset;

    -- Decoder CLOCK process
    p_clk: process is
    begin
        clk <= '0';
        wait for CLK_LOW;
        clk <= '1';
        WAIT FOR CLK_HIGH;
    end process p_clk;

    -- DSM CLOCK process
    p_mclk: process is
    begin
        mclk <= '0';
        wait for 0.4 * MCLK_LOW;
        mclk <= '1';
        WAIT FOR MCLK_HIGH;
        mclk <= '0';
        wait for 0.6 * MCLK_LOW;
    end process p_mclk;

    -- Test process
    p_test : process is
    begin
        -- input "1001"
        input_1(DATA_IN);
        input_0(DATA_IN);
        input_0(DATA_IN);
        input_1(DATA_IN);

        -- -- input "1000"
        -- input_1(DATA_IN);
        -- input_0(DATA_IN);
        -- input_0(DATA_IN);
        -- input_0(DATA_IN);

        -- -- input "1110"
        -- input_1(DATA_IN);
        -- input_1(DATA_IN);
        -- input_1(DATA_IN);
        -- input_0(DATA_IN);

```

```

-- Add more input patterns

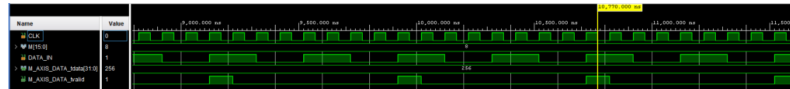
end process p_test;

end architecture rtl;
Code language: VHDL (vhd1)

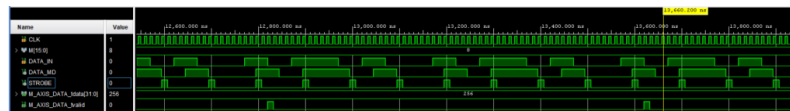
```

In this testbench, we chose a decimation rate of $M = 8$. The output word size is then 9 bits, and the maximum output range is $2^9 - 1 = 511$. We can select different input patterns, and the sinc³ filter output will be proportional to the number of '1's in the bit stream.

Input pattern = "1001" (50% 1s), output = 256



Synchronous decoder

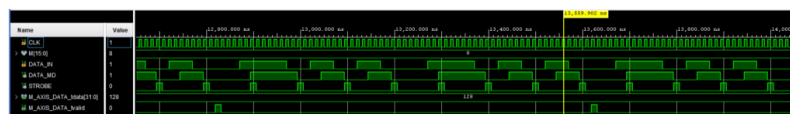


Manchester decoder

Input pattern = "1000" (25% 1s), output = 128



Synchronous decoder

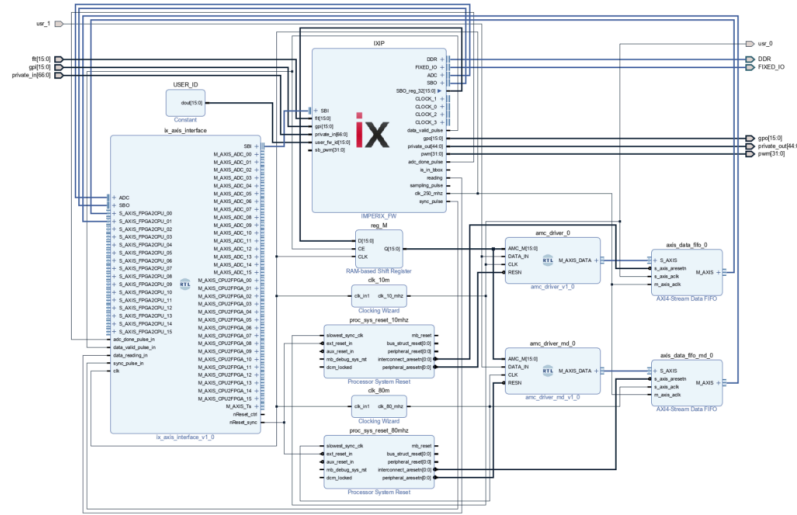


Manchester decoder

Deployment on the B-Board PRO

This Vivado project shows how to add the synchronous decoder and/or Manchester decoder block to the B-Board firmware and send output data to the CPU through ix_axis_interface. This project starts from the template introduced in [Getting started with FPGA control development](#), and the following blocks are added to the project.

- clk_10m is the 10MHz clock source for the AMC1035 and its output is connected to the physical pin USR[0]
- clk_80m is the 80MHz clock for Manchester decoding
- amc_driver_0 and amc_driver_md_0 are the synchronous decoder and Manchester decoder blocks, their input DATA_IN is connected to the physical pin USR[1]
- Two AXI4-Stream FIFOs are used to deal with the asynchronous data transfer between different clock fields, their outputs are sent to the CPU through FPGA2CPU_00 and FPGA2CPU_01
- The decimation ratio M is sent to the FPGA through SBO_reg_32
- proc_sys_reset_10mhz and proc_sys_reset_80mhz provide active low resets for the 10MHz and 80MHz clock fields, their ext_reset_n input is connected to nReset_sync port of ix_axis_interface



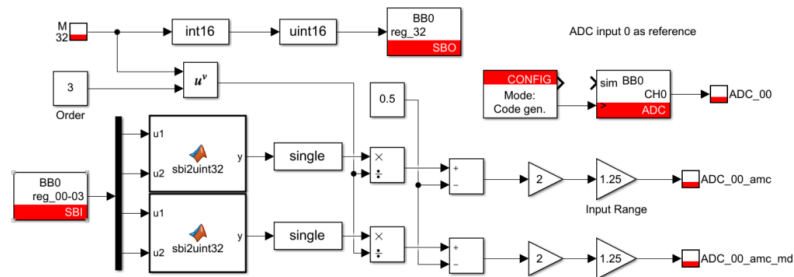
This project has both implementations integrated. In a real application, users can choose one approach or the other, according to their needs.

Before synthesizing the project, Vivado will report timing failure at reg_M because the asynchronous data transfer (due to the 250MHz FPGA main clock and the 10MHz/80MHz decoder clock) may lead to a metastable state. However, since we know that, in reality, there will be enough time to wait for a new stable state, this issue can be safely ignored by setting a longer maximum delay. In order to do this, a new constraint file must be added to the Vivado project following the instructions in [Getting started with FPGA control development](#). The constraints below shall be sufficient to circumvent this issue.

```
set_max_delay -from [get_pins {top_i/reg_M/U0/i_synth/i_bb_inst/gen_output_regs.output_regs/i_no_async_controls.ou
set_max_delay -from [get_pins {top_i/reg_M/U0/i_synth/i_bb_inst/gen_output_regs.output_regs/i_no_async_controls.ou
```

```
set_max_delay -from [get_pins {top_i/reg_M/U0/i_synth/i_bb_inst/gen_output_regs.output_regs/i_no_async_controls.ou
set_max_delay -from [get_pins {top_i/reg_M/U0/i_synth/i_bb_inst/gen_output_regs.output_regs/i_no_async_controls.ou
```

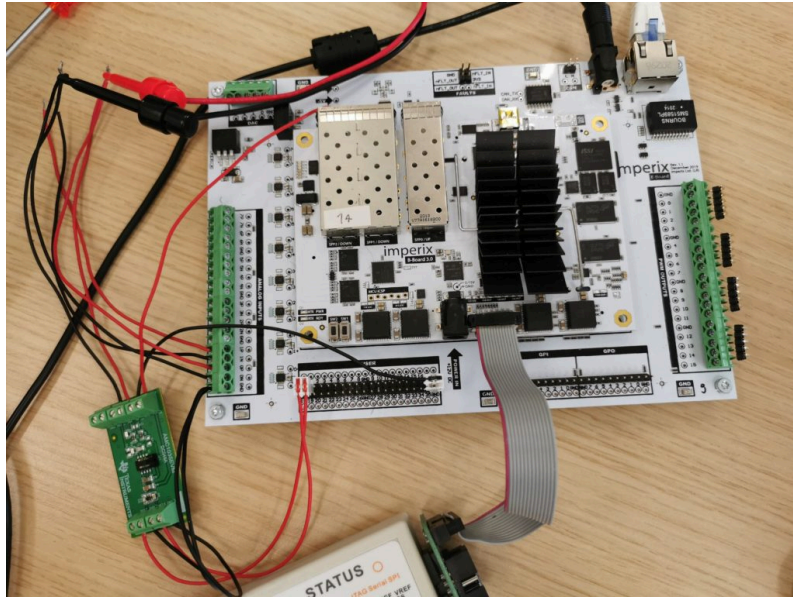
On the CPU side, a Simulink file is provided, which reads the sinc3 filter output and converts the uint32 data to Volts. As introduced in its [datasheet](#), the full-scale input range of AMC1035 is ± 1.25 V, then the sinc³ filter with decimation ratio M converts the input to $1 + 3 \log_2 M$ bits. Based on this, data can be recovered using the program below.



Experimental results

The following hardware was used:

- B-Board evaluation kit
- AMC1035 evaluation module
- Function generator



A 50Hz 2V (p-p voltage) sine wave is connected to ADC 0 of the B-Board and the input port of the AMC1035, and the results are plotted in BB Control. The three signals overlap properly, showing that the synchronous decoder and Manchester decoder blocks for the delta-sigma modulator both work properly.

